

N-1484

Special Branch

FILE

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March 18, 1942

H. LUKACS - Communication from, requesting permission to organize lotteries of valuables.

Heinrich LUKACS, German Jewish refugee, born at Eisenstadt on September 5, 1888, who arrived in Shanghai from Europe in November 1938, has been interviewed in respect of the contents of his letter dated February 20, 1942 addressed to the Shanghai Municipal Council in which he applies for permission to organize lotteries of valuables.

The applicant, who is financially supported in his existence by the Committee for the Assistance of European Jewish refugees in Shanghai and who was formerly a refugee camp inmate is, himself, without funds, and extremely vague as to what he intends to do in the organizing of the proposed lottery. He states that if he secures permission from the Municipal Council to operate any kind of lottery it is his intention to approach Japanese or Chinese sources for sufficient funds to provide the initial outlay for the venture. He has not the slightest idea at present as to where the gaming tables would be located and when questioned as to where he would find patrons to gamble for 30,000 objects daily (a statement he makes in his communication), he made no reply.

LUKACS talks about offering prizes such as an Omega gold watch, an order for a suit of clothes, a pair of shoes, a silver canovar, etc., etc. and also mentions that of every \$4 to these tickets sold one would secure a prize. Taking into consideration

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ation the cost of such prizes as quoted higher (they would not, of course, all be of such value) the price of tickets would necessarily have to be high, though LUKACS, vague as ever, cannot give any indication as to the likely prices of tickets.

While it is appreciated that Central European refugees would benefit by the scheme, were it allowed, and they definitely do require financial support in these stringent times, LUKACS and his unknown financial backers would also line their pockets to a considerable extent. While LUKACS may be credited with a praiseworthy attempt to assist Jewish refugees in these critical times, it ought to be pointed out that a properly constituted Committee is in existence for the caring of such refugees and this Committee has not, up to the present, evinced the slightest desire to conduct anything slightly resembling the matter under question.

LUKACS could not even state, when asked, whether the gambling was more or less expressly designed to take place in refugee or non-refugee circles, but in any event, when consideration is given to stagnation in trade and the nebulousness of the intended scheme it is extremely doubtful whether such a plan would be feasible.

As a matter of interest it should also be pointed out that in the event of permission being granted for this lottery to be operated, similar requests are almost certain to be received.

According to Police files consulted during this Council has never granted its approval

to requests of this nature, it being held that it is not in the public interest to permit another lottery to operate at the same time as the "Loterie d'ŕ Bienfaisance pour les Refugies," (Refugee Relief Lottery).